DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 079 618 CG 007 081

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TITLE The Study and Measurement of Values and Attitudes.
PUB DATE Apr 72
NOTE 10p.; Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, 3-7 April, 1972, Chicago, Illinois

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Beliefs; Concept Formation; *Definitions; Educational Research; Personal Values; Social Attitudes; *Social Values; Speeches; *Values

ABSTRACT

The author defines values, attitudes, and beliefs according to their relation to referents. A referent is a construct standing for a set or category of social objects, ideas, or behaviors that is the focus of an attitude. Attitudes and values are belief systems. Beliefs are enduring cognitions about referents; beliefs reflect the value and attitude systems to which they are related. An attitude is an enduring emotional, motivational, perceptual and cognitive organization of beliefs about referents, or sets of referents, that predispose individuals to behave positively or negatively toward the referents. A value is an organization of beliefs about abstract referents; values set judgments of "goodness" or "badness" on the referents and imply preferences for norms and standards of behavior. Referents are differentially criterial to different sets of individuals, depending on their personal orientations. While great progress has been made in the measurement of attitudes, little apparent interest exists in the measurement of values. The author sees the definition of values and the distinction between attitudes and values as necessary for furthering the progress of value research. (Author/NMF)

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(Talk, AERA symposium on values, April 5, 1972.)

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The Study and Measurement of Values and Attitudes

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Why values have not been studied more than they have puzzles me. They are certainly important in human affairs. Indeed, it can be said that the essence of major human choices and conflicts lies in value differences. Attitudes have been exhaustively studied, but it is only recently that theory has guided attitude research. Most of the work has been measurement, attitude-change, and survey oriented. There has also not been much concern for the nature of attitudes. And the relation between attitudes and values has been almost untouched: we know little, especially empirically, about the factors behind general social attitudes and what I will call general social values.

In the brief time I have allotted to me I want to define values, discuss the relation between values and attitudes, mention a theory of attitudes that may also be a theory of values, and talk about the measurement of values. The terms attitudes, values, beliefs, and opinions seem to be used synonymously by many people. I think there are decided theoretical and practical advantages in distinguishing them.

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Definitions: Beliefs, Attitudes, Values

To plunge us right into values and their measurement, I have

passed out a demonstration scale to measure educational values. (Please rank-order the 12 educational concepts according to your positive and negative feeling toward the concepts. 1 = very positive feeling; 12 = very negative feeling.) This scale can be considered an attitude scale or a values scale, as we will see.[1] Six of the items are associated with traditonal beliefs and six with progressive beliefs. (You can easily identify them.) Three of each are conceived as value referents and three are attitude referents. More on this later.

Attitudes and values are belief systems. Beliefs are enduring cognitions about referents (cognitive objects, like neighborhood schools, children's interests, school busing), end-states or goals of life, and means of attaining end-states or goals. Beliefs reflect the value and attitude systems to which they are related. An attitude is an enduring emotional, motivational, perceptual, and cognitive organization of beliefs about referents, or sets of referents, that predispose individuals to behave positively or negatively toward the referents. A value is an organization of beliefs about abstract referents and principles, behavioral norms or standards, and end-states of life. Values put judgments of goodness or badness on the referents, the principles, and the end-states of life, and imply moral compulsion and preferences for norms and standards of behaving.

Note that attitudes and values are kinds of beliefs. The main differences, I think, are in the referents of the beliefs and in

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[1] I want to emphasize that the scale was prepared specifically as a demonstration instrument for this talk. It is not mean to be an actual attitude-value scale.

the links to behavior. I will talk only about the referents. Attitudes have relatively specific reference: subject matter, neighborhood schools, the three R's, blacks, Jews, Supreme Court, private property. Values either have abstract referents or words that express abstract principles: loyalty, freedom, equality, moral standards in education, desegregation, and the like. Here are two traditionalist sentence items to illustrate the difference. The first is an attitude item with a fairly clear and relatively specific referent: the three R's.

Schools of today are neglecting the three R's.

The second is a value item:

The curriculum should contain an orderly arrangement of subjects that represent the best of our cultural heritage.

Its referents, probably "orderly arrangement of subjects" and "cultural heritage" are more abstract.

For years I thought that my education scales were attitude scales. When I developed a structural theory of attitudes, however, I was forced to redefine attitudes. This led to reconsideration of the items of the scales. A number of them appeared not to be attitude items. I now realize that they are probably value items. Those that seem not to have clearly identifiable referents are belief items that imply principles springing from underlying attitude-value systems. Take one item: "Standards of work should not be same for all pupils; they should vary with the pupil." This item has no specific attitude referent. Nor does it have a more abstract referent that can be conceived as a value referent. It is evidently a belief that reflects an underlying principle, which in turn reflects an underlying educational value system: a positive evaluation of individual differences and treating children individually.

A Structural Theory of Attitudes--and Values

The theoretical ideas that have led not only to what I believe to be a better conceptualization of attitudes, but also of values and their relation to attitudes are as follows. The theory can be called a criterial referents theory of attitudes. The cognitive core of attitude responses is conceived to be to the referents of attitudes.

A referent is a construct that stands for a set or category of social objects, ideas, or behaviors that is the focus of an attitude. Referents are differentially criterial to different sets of individuals. To progressives, referents like child-centered curriculum, activity program in schools, and pupil interaction, are criterial. To individuals who are traditional, on the other hand, referents like subject matter, the three R's and moral standards in education are criterial.

Let A be a set of referents criterial to progressives and B a set of referents criterial to traditionalists. The two sets are conceived to be independent and essentially different kinds of referents that are the "objects" of attitudes and that are criterial to different sets of people. While common sense suggests that individuals who approve A referents will disapprove B referents, this is in general not so. The theory and the evidence that supports the theory indicate that progressives are not necessarily anti-traditional and that traditionalists are not necessarily anti-progressive. To a traditionalist in education, for example, subject matter is criterial but children's interests is not criterial (though it may

have a slight negative connotation). To the traditionalist, subject matter is important, relevant, and significant. He is relatively indifferent to children's interests. This is much like the liberal to whom civil rights is criterial. Now, a conservative will not necessarily oppose civil rights; it just doesn't matter that much to him. There is considerably more to the theory, but I haven't time to elaborate.

Value referents are more abstract and reflect, as I said earlier, beliefs that reflect principles or end-states: equality, civil rights, racial integration, loyalty, moral standards, discipline, tradition, authority. While something is known about the underlying structure or factors of attitudes, little is known about the structure of values. I believe, however, that the two second-order or basic factors that seem to underlie educational and social attitudes also underlie educational and social values. The main difference is probably that the underlying structure of the values domain is more complex.

Evidence Supporting the Theory

Let me now summarize some of the attitude evidence--part of which is inadvertently value evidence--that supports the criterial referents theory. Factor analyses of the items of educational and social attitude scales have all yielded similar first-order factors and virtually the same two second-order factors. The first-order educational attitude factors--I will omit consideration of the first-order general social attitude factors--separated, in the last and best study, into three progressivism, or A, factors and three traditionalism, or B, factors. With almost no exceptions A items loaded on A factors and

B items on B factors. More important, two second-order factors emerged from the factor analysis of the correlations among the factors. The three A factors appeared on one of these factors, and the three B factors appeared on the other. Similar results have been obtained with other educational attitude and general social attitude scales.

It has been said that Kerlinger writes his items, perhaps not consciously, to fit his theory. Items that may not fit the theory are eliminated. To test the theory more rigorously, a 50-item scale, consisting of single words or short phrases, presumed to be a wide sampling of attitude referents, was constructed from over 300 referents obtained from study of the literature and from previous research results. The scale was administered to large samples in New York, North Carolina, and Texas. The first- and second-order factor analytic results showed practically the same first- and second-order structures as those obtained with sentence items. Some idea of the factors can be had from the factor, and the referents loaded on the factors. (See the second handout.)

The first three factors, I, V, and VI, are conservatism (C) factors; the second three, II, III, and IV, are liberalism (L) factors. A glance through the factor arrays will give their flavor. The unrotated and rotated second-order factor loadings are given below the factor arrays. As you can see, two relatively orthogonal factors, with the three C factors on one factor and the three L factors on the other factor, emerged. The theory appears to have validity.

This research was directed toward attitudes, however. How about values? As I said earlier, some of the sentence and referent items

are probably really value items. Indeed, they seem to satisfy the definition of values given earlier. If the referents of the factor arrays in the handout are studied carefully, we note that a number of them are specific and thus can be the objects of attitudes: Social Security, Supreme Court, Negroes, subject matter, church, real estate. Others, however, are abstract and reflect principles or end-states and thus, perhaps, values: desegregation, civil rights, child freedom, free enterprise, education as intellectual training, teaching of spiritual values, school discipline. Admittedly, the line is often hard to draw. But I suspect that's always the nature of values and attitudes.

The Measurement of Values and Attitudes

Great progress has been made in the measurement of attitudes. Summated-rating (Likert) scales, forced-choice scales, "situational" instruments, Q sorts, content analysis, and, perhaps, referent scales can all effectively measure attitudes. Although there have been interesting instruments written to measure values--the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values, Morris' Ways to Live, Rokeach's Value Survey, and several other scales--it can hardly be said that much progress has been made. The probable reasons are the apparent lack of interest of behavioral scientists and educators in values and value theory and research, the lack of clear definition of values and the concomitant lack of distinction between attitudes and values, and the inherent difficulty of measuring values, which are, by definition, loaded with social desirability.

My own feeling is that a good deal of research has first to be done learning the structure and content of values and the empirical relations between values and attitudes. For this purpose, summated-rating scales are probably best because responses to them permit factor analysis and other kinds of multivariate analysis. Once reasonable progress has been made in learning the factors behind value items, forced-choice types of measures--paired comparisons, forced-choice triads, tetrads, and pentads, and rank-order scales--can be used. These kinds of items seem admirably suited to the "choice" nature of values. That is, forced-choice items can be written to reflect realistically the nature of real-life situations. Q methodology will also be helpful, especially to explore intraindividual aspects of values. Content analysis and the intelligent use of the computer for the analysis of verbal materials will become increasingly important. In education, board of education and administrative documents, magazine and newspaper articles and editorials, and children's essays can be content analyzed for value themes and referents. Finally, I believe that the use of single value words and short phrases can be profitably used to measure values efficiently and reliably. Hopefully, their validity may also be satisfactory.

Conclusion

The scientific study of values in education is a rich and promising field. It is even relevant! While I have pretty much concentrated on my own work--and have not been able to produce definitive answers to many theoretical and empirical questions--I hope what I have said may be suggestive for research on educational and related values. Perhaps in the next ten years progress may be made in the study of values to the extent that we even know empirically what values are!

Educational Beliefs

Educational ideas confront us continually and these ideas affect our ways of thinking and behaving. Twelve such educational ideas are given below. People react differently to such ideas: some approve them; some disapprove them. Please rank-order the twelve concepts according to your positive and negative feelings about them, that is, your approval or disapproval of the ideas they express. Use the rank 1 to indicate the concept you feel most positively about, or that you approve the most. The rank 2 will indicate the concept you approve strongly but not quite as strongly as the first. Continue to rank the concepts through the rank 12, which will indicate the least approval, the least positive feeling (or the most negative feeling). Write the ranks you select in the space provided before each concept.

_____ federal aid to education

_____ neighborhood schools

_____ child-centered curriculum

_____ pupil growth

_____ social change through education

_____ cultural heritage

_____ the three R's

_____ moral standards in education

_____ school busing

_____ children's interests

_____ discipline

_____ subject matter

Factor Arrays of Oblique First-Order Factors, N = 530

I. Religiosity

religion (.78)
church (.75)
faith in God (.72)
Christian (.69)
religious education (.57)
teaching of spiritual values (.53)
moral standards in education (.36)
patriotism (.33)

II. Civil Rights

Negroes (.60)
civil rights (.57)
racial integration (.57)
Jews (.46)
desegregation (.43)
(racial purity (-.37))

III. Child-Centered Education

children's interests (.56)
child-centered curriculum (.54)
pupil personality (.54)
children's needs (.52)
self-expression of children (.47)
pupil interaction (.44)
child freedom (.37)

IV. Social Liberalism

Social Security (.53)
Supreme Court (.50)
federal aid to education (.49)
poverty program (.48)
socialized medicine (.47)
United Nations (.43)

V. Educational Traditionalism

subject matter (.59)
educational as intellectual training (.52)
school discipline (.44)
homogeneous grouping (.30)

VI. Economic Conservatism

free enterprise (.62)
real estate (.53)
private property (.43)
capitalism (.37)
national sovereignty (.30)
(scientific knowledge (.30))

Unrotated and Rotated Second-Order Factor Matrices

	Unrotated Matrix		Rotated Matrix		Factor Type
I	.69	.19	.71	-.09	C
II	-.44	.51	-.22	.64	I
III	-.05	.64	.19	.61	I
IV	-.36	.55	-.13	.65	I
V	.70	.33	.78	.04	C
VI	.68	.14	.68	-.12	C